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## MOSSES RARE IN PHILADELPHIA

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The study of almost any locality will reveal peculiarities in the distribution of moss species which furnish food for thought and conjecture concerning the why and wherefore of their occurrence in given places, while in other places apparently repeating exactly the same conditions of soil, moisture, and exposure, they are altogether absent.

For instance, in the city of Philadelphia, in clefts of granitic rock along the Wissahickon Creek, there are several stations for *Rhabdoweisia crispata* (Dicks.) Kindb.—long confused with *Rhabdoweisia fugax* (Hedw.) B. & S.—an alpine, subalpine, or mountain moss which is very rarely found in the lowlands. I have searched the clefts of granitic rocks for miles about, but have discovered no other growth of the same species. This moss does not fruit, but vegetatively subsists in these few spots restricted to a limited area.

On a northeasterly facing bank, also along Wissahickon Creek, for five years *Buxbaumia aphylla* L. grew in a colony which increased from 10 to 70 capsules, then decreased, altogether disappearing after 1914. Its neighbors were *Dicranella heteromalla* (Hedw.) Schimp., sparse *Catharinaea angustata* Brid., and immature specimens of a species of *Cladonia*. Although almost numberless banks of a similar nature have been carefully observed for years, I have found *Buxbaumia* elsewhere only in one locality in Delaware County and in the Pocono Mountains near Tobyhanna. How and why did the spores find these rare banks congenial substrata? *Webera sessilis* (Schmid.) Lindb.—though of much more frequent occurrence—also seems to display a certain whimsicality in the banks it chooses, leaving scores of similar banks bare of its presence.

There are many rocky stream-beds in our neighborhood, but in only one—that which flows through Highland Glen, near Chestnut Hill—have I ever noted the presence of *Eurynchium rusciforme* (Neck.) Milde. In only one place on rocks near the Wissahickon Creek have I detected non-fruiting patches of *Tortella tortuosa* (L.) Limpr., and the hepatic *Jubula pennsylvanica* (Steph.) Evans grows to my knowledge in but one streamlet, where it covers perpendicular dripping rocks.

How are these anomalies to be explained? I have found *Rhabdoweisia crispata* elsewhere no nearer than in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, *Buxbaumia aphylla* very rarely anywhere else, *Eurynchium rusciforme* and *Tortella tortuosa* elsewhere no nearer than the Delaware Water Gap, and *Jubula pennsylvanica* in only that one glen beside the Wissahickon Creek.

By painstaking explorations of our own neighborhood each of us may bring to light many interesting facts in regard to the distribution of the bryophytes. It is hoped that all members of our Sullivant Moss Society may be on the alert and that, in future, they may have something to say concerning the rarities which occur perhaps at the very threshold of their homes.

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